THE Reconstructionist

ol. XII. December 13, 1946 Kislev 20, 5707 No. 16

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AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON RECONSTRUCTIONISM
between Emil Bernhard Cohn and Mordecai M. Kaplan

WANTED—A JEWISH NATIONAL "WEDDING GIFT FUND"
by Solomon Liebman

THE ONE UNHEARD (poem)
by Norman Podhoretz

RANDOM THOUGHTS *by M. M. K.*

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by Harold U. Ribalow

REALITIES AND VALUES *CORRESPONDENCE*

Dedicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of Israel's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

the Reconstructionist

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THE

Reconstructionist

.. XII. December 13, 1946 Kislev 20, 5707 No. 16

DITORIALS

ING TO OUR SPONSIBILITIES

AMERICAN Jews have girded their loins, prepar- to raise the incredible sum of $170,-,000 in the United Jewish Appeal of 7. The magnificent courage and sym-hy which this goal implies are elo-nt testimony to the role of leader-which American Jews have finally med. The Atlantic City conference edicated the energies of the five mil- Jews of our land to the succor of ir fellow Jews, the rehabilitation of tz Yisrael and the absorption and blesome adjustment to their new en-nment, of those who will be admitted he United States.

The adoption of the $170,000,000 goal, vever, does not tell the whole story. e UJA has, at the same time, made f responsible for seeking the remain- $45,000,000 required by present needs, m Jewish communities outside the ited States, such as Canada, Latin erica, England, South Africa and Aus-ia. This means that, henceforth, the A will be an international effort, sym-zing the unity and mutual responsi-y of world Jewry; and at its head be the American Jewish community.

This newer role places upon the Jews of the United States a sacred obligation, not only to live up to the expectations of the Atlantic City Conference, but also to establish itself as the exemplar of Jewish communities living under democratic governments, and enjoying the freedoms of democratic societies. American Jewry will be asking the Jewries of other lands to match its generosity. But will it be in a position also to spur on other Jewries to match it in rational and systematic organization, in religious and cultural achievement, in high ethical living? Unless American Jewry can boast of more than its fund-raising capacities, it will not be able to boast even of those, for the respect of other Jewries will not be held, though it may momentarily be gained, by prodigious collections.

We are therefore particularly pleased to note that the conference this year did not include among its resolutions one which called on all other agencies to freeze their budgets at *status quo* in order that all increases in income might accrue to the UJA. Though the various communities throughout the land acquiesced in this plan in 1946, they did so reluctantly, resenting the notion that there could possibly be a ceiling upon their urge to contribute, and rejecting the implication that overseas needs could only be met by neglecting local needs. The UJA

leaders undoubtedly realized that American Jews were unwilling to starve their philanthropic, cultural and religious institutions, and that they would sacrifice, if need be, to satisfy the demands of both local and overseas causes. They have shown this in their readiness to adopt the new goal of $170,000,000 without any qualifications.

THE ROLE OF HADASSAH

THE thirty-second annual convention of Hadassah and the twenty-third annual convention of Junior Hadassah, both held in November, remind us again of the vigorous role which women are playing in Jewish life today. They are active in the affairs of the synagogue through the Women's Auxiliaries and the Sisterhoods. Often they represent the most vital element within the religious institution. Women find themselves, quite naturally, in the field of philanthropy. Every fund-raising drive for local or overseas needs has its quota of women organizers and solicitors. In Jewish education, in the arts, music and literature, Jewish women share in the enhancement of Judaism in America. In American civic affairs, Jewish women participate on all fronts. Some Jewish women's organizations, such as the National Council of Jewish Women, make domestic legislation, immigration and naturalization law reform, and efforts for world peace the basis of their programs of activity.

It is, however, in Hadassah and in Junior Hadassah, organizations specifically devoted to the ideal of the establishment and development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, that we find a union of most of the endeavors in which Jewish women are engaged. Perhaps that is the natural offshoot of the vision and leadership of Henrietta Szold, Hadassah's founder. Zionism means nation building. Politics, social and civic service, education, culture and religion are all elements in the life of any civilization.

The Hadassah member, being a conscious Zionist, partakes of Zionist political life. Thus, at the World Zionist Congress which will have opened at Basle by the time this issue reaches our readers, twenty-eight Hadassah delegates will help shape the future course of the Zionist movement. The Hadassah member is fully conscious, also, of her responsibilities as an American citizen. She familiarizes herself with prospective legislation, informs herself of the strengths and the weaknesses of our democracy, and concerns herself with the efficacy of measures designed to safeguard and extend the democratic way of life. She realizes that Palestine is not being built up in a vacuum, that it is part of the world. Therefore, it is the duty of the Hadassah member to be aware of world events and world trends, particularly as these are reflected in the proceedings of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies.

Traditionally, Jewish women have been devoted to philanthropy. Through Hadassah in Palestine this devotion is translated into constructive terms of preventive and curative medicine, of medical research and public health education, of child and infant care, of vocational education, of setting up recreational facilities, and of a dramatic program of youth rescue—Youth Aliyah.

In the field of religion, Hadassah presents diversity. Members of Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist congregations as well as the unsynagogued will be found within the chapter. Its programs for holiday observance and for *Onege Shabbat* are a contribution to the enhancement of religio

d in its adherence to the social idealism the Jewish National Fund and the co-erative enterprises in Palestine, and in practical application of its motto: The Healing of the Daughter of My ople," Hadassah finds an expression of igion in its deepest and truest sense.

Hadassah's educational program is de-ned to effect self-knowledge and self-lization. Through the Hadassah mem-, education percolates into the home d into the community. In Palestine, adassah's health and education program s been the prod for like efforts by the vernment and by other Jewish organ-tions. So, in many a local Jewish com-nity in America, Hadassah acts as the nulus for educational enterprises on part of the community.

In considering these activities and ir implications, it may be said that Ha-ssah is one of the greatest factors in survival of Judaism in America.

Whence comes the strength of this or-nization, an organization unique in wish communal life? What is it that kes women from the home, from the fessions, and from the business world te in a common endeavor? Part of the planation lies in the expert leadership Hadassah, in its close contact with individual member, in its well planned cational and public relations program, H in its policy of adopting specific pro-ts which give each member a special k. But, above all, Hadassah's strength in the selfless service which it receives m its members, a service inspired by knowledge that, through participation the Zionist movement, each member res with her people all over the world common adventure of reconstituting nationhood of the Jewish people so t it may, as a people, once more make contribution to the civilization of the rld.

FREE SPEECH AND MASS-PRODUCTION LIBEL

THE right of free speech has its limits. As a proposition in ethics that is quite clear. Nobody would assert that people have an inherent right to lie, to insult and to slander at will. *Lashon ra*, the abuse of speech, appears high on the traditional list of moral offenses. But the legal control of speech, the protection which the state should offer against injury through its abuse, is not a simple matter. Our law has not adjusted itself to those social and technological developments which have immeasurably increased the menace of irresponsible and vicious propaganda.

This is well illustrated by the hearings conducted before the Federal Communications Commission on the application of the New York *Daily News* for the right to operate an FM broadcasting station. The granting of this privilege has been opposed at the hearings by the American Jewish Congress on the ground of the *Daily News's* racial bias. An attempt is being made to make the Congress's demand that the application of the *News* be rejected appear to be an encroachment of freedom of the press. This charge was made in Arthur Krock's column in the New York *Times* (November 15, 1946) and has since been ably answered in a letter to the *Times* by Alexander H. Pekeles, a professor of the New School Graduate Faculty and a chief consultant of the American Jewish Congress (published in the November 27th issue of the *Times*).

According to Arthur Krock, any attempt to subject the policy of a newspaper to review or examination as a condition of granting it the right to broadcast is an attempt by government to interfere with the freedom of the press. Only the possession of the technical fa-

cilities for the broadcasting should, in his opinion, be so considered. Against this argument, Alexander H. Pekeles contends that there is a fundamental logical and technological distinction between running a newspaper and running a broadcasting station. There is no physical limit to the number of newspapers that can be published; there is a definite limit to the number of wave length available for broadcasting. Since any person who can find the means may publish a paper, while only those approved by the FCC may run a broadcasting station, to publish a paper may be considered a *right,* to run a broadcasting station a *privilege.* To be sure, the publication of racially biased news or editorial comment even in a newspaper is, ethically speaking, a wrong rather than a right, but the danger of suppressing the public discussion of issues or withholding information from the public is so great that the American tradition of no government interference with the editing of a paper is justified. Democracy involves faith in the ultimate capacity of the people to judge what is good and right if they have access to the necessary information; they must not be prevented from hearing all sides on public issues and obtaining all data relevant to their determination. This has its dangers but it is a safer course than any form of totalitarian control of opinion by government.

But the case of the radio is entirely different. Here it is no longer a matter of a free-for-all discussion. As Professor Pekeles points out, the government cannot confer on one individual or corporation the right to broadcast without, by that very action, denying it to other possible applicants. It must select its applicants and it therefore has the duty as well as the right to select them on the basis of their qualifications for rendering good public service. Among these qualifications mora standards should rank first, not last. The government is as justified in considering the moral influence that a broadcaste is likely to exert as that which a schoo teacher is likely to exert. And where the applicant is a newspaper, how better can it judge the kind of influence it would wield as a broadcaster than by the kind of influence it has wielded as a newspaper?

This gives merely the gist of the lengthy and closely reasoned letter of Professor Pekeles. We call it to our readers' attention not merely for its bearing on the issue with which it is immediately concerned, the issue of keeping the air free from the menace of hate propaganda but as an illustration of the nature of the larger problem of which it is a part. Our present laws guaranteeing freedom of speech, press and religion have come down to us from an era when the main danger to the individual's freedom of self-expression came to him from governmental interference with his right to say and to write, to hear and to read whatever he wished. That is not the situation today. People are dependent for their access to the knowledge and interpretation of events upon powerful interests that can secure for themselves possession of the complicated and expensive mechanisms of news and propaganda such as radio, the movies and the modern types of news-press. Free competition in ideas no longer prevails. The publicizing of ideas is measurably controlled by private interests. These may be sinister interests. If they are permitted to remain irresponsible in the expression of any prejudices they may wish for private reasons to propagandize, the public must develop the means for protecting itself against them. Democracy can afford to tolerate a certain amount of the abuse of free speech on a piecemeal scale; it cannot

ford to tolerate the circulation of libels
d hate-propaganda on a mass-produc-
n scale.

HE LARGER ISSUES PRESENTED ' THE COAL SITUATION

THE future of Demoracy depends on its ability to
oncile freedom with security. The
rrent coal strike affords an illustration
the ever-growing complexity of that
oblem. The right of labor to strike
ien the conditions affecting labor be-
me intolerable is inherent in the con-
pt of freedom. The right of the public
protection against a complete paralysis
its economic life is involved in the con-
pt of security.

The dramatic interest of the gov-
nment's proceedings against John L.
wis should not befog the basic issue
esented by the total situation. That
ue goes far beyond the question of the
ality of Lewis's unilateral termination
his union's contract with the Govern-
nt. Indeed, public resentment against
head of the Miner's Union derives
marily not from shock at his alleged
ach of contract, but rather from shock
the fact that one man can cripple the
ole economy of the country. Lewis did
create that fact; he is merely using
with a cold recklessness, callous to the
astrous consequences of his action.

The fact itself is the natural inevitable
growth of the steadily increasing in-
ration of industry. More and more,
whole economic life of the country
ws dependent upon its basic industries.
e latter now constitute the central
ver-house of the public economy.
row the switch there and the whole
chanism will soon grind to a dead halt.
ether or not such "absolute power,"
use Lord Acton's phrase, has, in
wis's case, corrupted "absolutely," is
only of passing concern. Of more permanent interest is the question: how prevent any one person or group of persons from having ready access to the switch and yet guarantee to the worker his right to use his collective organized power to improve his standard of living?

The real danger at the moment is the disconcerting possibility that a Republican Congress, backed by a public temporarily blinded by anger at the economic chaos caused by the coal strike, will move to cancel the gains made by labor under the Roosevelt New Deal. Such reactionary legislation will, of course, solve nothing and will serve only to set off a knock-down, drag-out fight between capital and labor, the like of which this country has never witnessed. One devoutly hopes that better counsels will prevail, that there will be a growing recognition of the need for constructive rather than repressive labor legislation. Such legislation should, for example, establish Federal Labor Courts to deal with capital-labor disputes that involve large public interests. At present, these disputes are struggles in which power, on the one side or the other, determines the victory. With the growing concentration of power on both sides, such clashes are bound to become protracted, bitter fights with increasingly ruinous results for the economy of the country as a whole. Labor disputes ought to be settled by ethical criteria and not by the fortuitous element of power.

Beside determining issues by more ethical criteria than at present, such labor courts would eliminate the prodigious economic waste now involved in large scale strikes. Production would continue uninterrupted while the contestants' claims were being adjudicated in court. The Labor Courts would be empowered to base their decisions on such vital factors as the fluctuating cost of living, the

profit-earning capacity of a given industry, and changing technological methods of production. True, no court could compel a worker to labor at the wage it determines but, by the same token, the worker's refusal to accept such wage would be tantamount to his resigning his proprietary interest in his job and, hence, his right to prevent others from seeking that job.

During the depression in the 1930's, social conditions made the establishment of minimum wage standards inevitable. Social need today demands that we go one step further and establish, on the basis of economic facts, fair wage standards in our basic industries. The same legal logic that justified the Minimum Wage Law would apply with equal cogency to this new departure.

A perfect solution to the problem of reconciling freedom and security that is applicable to all cases may not exist, but an approximate solution, as here suggested, is infinitely to be preferred to the recurrent clashes between capital and labor. For if left unchecked, such clashes must ultimately lead to the disruption of the whole social fabric of America. Wise statesmanship would therefore make constructive use of the nation's anxious concern over the challenge of Lewis and his unions. It would treat the present critical situation as a case study in what is wrong with our economic structure. And it would press for positive remedial action.

CORRECTION

In our last issue we made the erroneous statement that the Jewish Theological Seminary, as part of its plan to transform itself into a University of Judaism, was offering $15,000 scholarships to talented young people to pursue studies in the arts while taking orientation courses in the Seminary College of Jewish Studies. The amount of each fellowship should have read $1,500.

REALITIES AND VALUES

When the verdict of the Nuremberg trials was reported, our gratification with the sentences pronounced on the principal war criminals was somewhat tempered by the realization that the mass-slaughter of Jews was not considered an international crime except where it was proved to be part of a conspiracy to launch an aggressive war across national boundaries. Thus no precedent was established making the mass-slaughter of Jews or any other ethnic group an offense against humanity for which the perpetrators could be held internationally responsible. It is therefore reassuring to note that the United Nations Legal Committee has urged on the General Assembly the recognition of genocide as an international crime. In advocating the adoption of that resolution, Sir Hartley Shawcross, a representative of Great Britain, urged that genocide be considered a crime "for the commission of which principals and accessories, as well as states, are individually responsible."

▼

At the recent International Seamen's Conference called in London by the International Transport Workers' Federation, Palestine was represented for the first time. Our Jewish tars took advantage of the situation for driving home the significance of Jewish resistance to Great Britain's illegal restrictions on Jewish immigration to *Eretz Yisrael*. They called attention to the services rendered the British navy by Jewish seamen and to the losses suffered by them in the war. They called on the unions to protest against the British raids on fishing villages. And they urged on their fellow seamen from other lands not to man ships

nich were to be used to deport Jewish ugees from Palestine.

▼

We submit the following a choice specimen of rationalization: his column, "Why? Because. . . ." in e Boston *Jewish Advocate* of Novem- r 28, Rabbi Samuel J. Fox poses the estion, "Why is it that, in Jewish cus- m, the husband divorces his wife, but e wife does not divorce her husband?" fter citing the source of the law in Deu- ronomy 24:1, he goes on to explain. History relates that the Greeks and Ro- ans had a system of divorce wherein e wife could divorce her husband as sily as he could divorce her. As a re- lt of this, certain writers relate amus- g instances where certain women anged their minds as much as twenty- e times during a life-time and many a me had several mates in the same year. he effect of such laxity upon family e is only too easily noted. Many chil- en did not know their own fathers," ., etc. We have a simpler explanation offer: "It's a man's world,"—at least was when the law of Deuteronomy was omulgated.

▼

The long tradition of hite oppression of the Negro, which e South inherited from slavery days d which has corrupted the relations of e two races in the North as well, con- tutes one of the worst blots on Ameri- n honor. But we may derive some en- uragement from the efforts being made wipe out the blot, even in the deep uth. *Religious News Service* of Nov- mber 26 reports that delegates from he religious groups at the University Texas, together with those of five other ganizations, went on record as opposing cial segregation in education. The dele- tes voted unanimously to support a drive for funds to back the case of Her- man M. Sweatt, a Houston Negro, who is seeking to enter the University of Texas law school. He applied for admission nine months ago, and four months later a district court ordered that he be admit- ted unless an equal law school for Ne- groes could be set up within six months. We are glad to note that among the religious denominations represented was the Jewish religion, speaking through the Hillel Foundation at the University.

▼

An argument has been go- ing on in the Jewish papers as to whe- ther David Lilienthal, who rose to fame for his work with the TVA and who has more recently been appointed head of the President's Atomic Control Board, is or is not a Jew. Accoring to the *National Jewish Post* of November 22, the argu- ment has been settled. He is a Jew. His parents have testified in his behalf that, at the age of 13 he celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in the synagogue and Rabbi Abraham Feinstein states that, in response to a direct inquiry whether he was a Jew, Mr. Lilienthal answered, "I never denied it." No doubt that makes many of his fellow Jews jubilant. We, however, cannot join in the jubilation. Not that we do not have the highest regard for Mr. Lilienthal as a man and as a scien- tist. But we find it depressing to think how many of the best minds among our people have been so little touched by Jewish life that their Judaism is in no wise manifest to others in their daily con- duct. Not even the tragic suffering of our people and their heroic resistance to hostility have impelled some of our intel- lectuals to identify themselves actively and publicly with Jewish communal life. This is not said in criticism of Mr. Lilien- thal; it is said in the painful awareness of how much needs to be done to inter-

(*Continued on Page* 17)

An Exchange of Views on Reconstructionism

BETWEEN EMIL BERNHARD COHN AND MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

Rabbi Emil Bernhard Cohn is a distinguished German rabbi, author and playright who came to this country in the late thirties.

I came to know about him in the first decade of the century. At that time he was rabbi of one of the principal Liberal Jewish congregations in Berlin and created a great sensation by preaching Zionism from its pulpit. This led to a break with the anti-Zionist administration of the Berlin Jewish community.

His resignation from his Liberal congregation almost coincided in time with Dr. Magnes's resignation from the pulpit of Temple Emanuel for the same reason, his espousal of Zionism. Dr. Magnes then presented me with a volume of Dr. Cohn's essays which were written in a highly poetic German prose. They enabled me to see how he was the type of man who could move the hearts of people.

Ever since then I have been following his writings, but noted a change in the direction of Orthodoxy. Later, I learned that he had accepted a pulpit of a small congregation of well-to-do-Orthodox Jews in a suburb of Berlin. Since he came to America he has lectured for Zionism and held several pulpits, and is now living in Los Angeles. I had occasion to meet him this summer and to discuss Reconstructionism with him. He advanced his criticism and I asked him to send us a statement incorporating his views.

MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

RABBI COHN'S STATEMENT

CREATIVENESS is one of those words in the American vocabulary which is often misunderstood by the common man and even more so by writers, journalists, scholars and orators who make it their business to lead and influence the common man.

There is much talk today about the problem of how to make American Judaism creative again. I ponder day and night on what those who do the talking —and there are excellent men among them—have in mind when they speak of a new creativeness in American Jewish life. This may, therefore, be the right time to clarify our conceptions in that respect. That is the purpose for which these lines are written.

Can Creativeness Be Created?

Creativeness is a privilege of the individual only. However, if there are many creative personalities in a community, one may say, though taking the statement with a grain of salt, that that community is creative. But to suppose that creativeness can be created does not make any sense at all.

Creativeness is best interpreted as "absorptive capacity." On the one hand, there are the press, the radio, the screen, all of them representing present day life. On the other, there is the past with its history, traditions, customs and habits. True, we have to adapt ourselves to contemporary civilization. Whether we want to or not, we are in a continual process of assimilation in that direction. But we have to beware of the danger involved. Either we are weak and debilitated or we are strong and absolute in our stand. If we are weak we will soon be absorbed by the surrounding civilization; if we are strong, it is we who do the absorbing. The creative personality is always ahead of and never behind his time.

Was not Maimonides a modern man in his era? Was he not far ahead of his contemporaries? He absorbed Aristotle in his philosophy, but what he gave us was not Aristotle but a full and strong Judaism. He, the most modern Jew in his time, was fully aware of what he was doing when he studied the Arab

losophers. And that awareness dis-guishes him from our modern phil-phers of religion who are working in very opposite direction. Instead of orbing what they see, read, hear and rn, they either purposely refuse to do or else they lack that firmness and de-mination which is the prerequisite of creativeness. They take the relative l evolutionary aspect of our age for nted. They assume its theories to be t, with which they have to come to ms irrevocably, once and for all. Such modern mind, they argue, so let us nge accordingly and subject Judaism our own convenience.

ativism, the Weakness of constructionism

What we have just said applies not y to Reform but also to the most cessful movement in present day erican Jewry: Reconstructionism. constructionism is an *eminently prac-l movement.* To its credit be it l that it not only has brought some ty into the chaos of Reform but has aroused a new spiritual interest in ish life. For two millenia Judaism centered in God and formed, we y say, a circle rotating around God His word, thus being a "religion" l having nationhood, folklore and all ir accessories within itself. But times e changed and in the era of secular-ion a large part of the people crossed circumference of the circle forming circles of their own: "We are a na-—one nation!" Herzl exclaimed. We have not one large circle, well cen-ed in God, but many smaller circles quently intersecting each other. These ng the circumstances, Reconstruction-must be looked upon as the only seri-attempt to draw again one large le, "Civilization," circumscribing all se smaller circles — religion, nation-ality, folklore, traditions, customs, habits and so on. The weak point is only that this new circle has no "center of absoluteness" around which the Jewish world could rotate. Consequently, Recon-structionism, though very useful and practical in many respects, cannot be con-sidered as a genuinely creative move-ment, and that by its own nature, since it subjects Jewishness and Judaism to evolution, i.e., to relativity just as Reform has been doing. True, we are living in an era of relativity and the world is changing every day. But something, as I said, *must* be absolute and unchangeable in our lives, else the era of neo-barbarism is at hand. With all due respect to relativ-ity and its illustrious representatives— Darwin, Marx, Einstein, etc. — when it comes to those spheres in which the Abso-lute is king, such as Religion and Ethics, we have to say: Hands off!

To say with Reconstructionism that Judaism is no religion but a civilization does not change the fact that there are still enough religious men and women in the world who do not want to yield to the intellectual error of our century— that ethics can be kept asunder from re-ligion. Basically they are one and the same thing, with just two distinctions. The religious and pious man has the urg-ent desire to address the Absolute and Infinite in the Universe—from time to time and finds deep satisfaction in doing so, while the merely ethical man refuses to do so. Secondly, the merely ethical man takes the cream of religion—ethics—and pours the skim milk into the gutter. He does not realize that he would not have had any cream unless there had first been some milk; whereas the religious personality judges even traditional ob-servances *sub specie aeternitatis* (under the aspect of eternity) and tries—tries at least—to find something of the absolute-ness of eternity within them. They are

old, he argues, and I love them because they are old, because by their age they remind me that there are still things in this changing world of ours to which to hold on, things that have not changed for centuries and even for millenia.

Is this an orthodox attitude? I do not think so. Even with such an attitude concessions can be made and should be made. We have even the word of Cardinal Newman that "concessions belong to the arsenal of true orthodoxy." It depends only to whom we make them. I can often close my eyes to "Reb Yisroel" the individual and even to my own better conscience, where I cannot close them to "Am Yisroel" or, as we say, to "Klal Yisroel," the community of Israel. We have as yet no religious agency which could bind and loosen, forbid and allow. On the other hand—if I reject the principle of authority I cannot claim authority for myself. Even if I were the greatest Talmudic authority, my heart would tremble and rather break before I would dare to change, i.e., to relegate ancient—and by their antiquity almost eternal—things to relativity, thus bringing evolution into a realm which is and eternally has to be absolute—religion. Everyone knows that changes have been made in the course of history. But, in spite of all changes, up to the era of Enlightenment, the eye of the Jew was focused on God and His word, unchangeably and passionately. What is so alarming today, is not that traditions, customs and habits have changed, but that the vision of the Jew has changed and is changing every day, that it no longer is focused on God.

Maximalism vs. Minimalism

I asked before: Is this an orthodox attitude? Now I ask: Is such an attitude incompatible with science and incomprehensible to the modern mind? For this there are two answers: First of all, the word, *modern* is the most perverse conception in present day language. The "modern" is the eternal truth which is superseded in five or ten years by another eternal truth, sometimes even in a single year. It degrades eternity to fashionableness and mode. But traditions are no mode and Judaism is not a matter of fashion but a way of life. Secondly, this question puts us on the crossroads of "maximalism" and "minimalism." Let us not speak of modernism but rather of youth and old age. Everyone will agree that it is the privilege of youth to be maximalistic. For as long a time as we can remember, youth has been challenging the world with the greatest possible demands, and it is the unmistakable symptom of incipient decline for a people to prefer minimalism, that is personal comfort, convenience and ease, to the harder way of law-abiding duties.

We have a great example of maximalism in present day Jewish history—*halutziut!* Our *halutz,* our pioneer who went to Palestine to till the soil and to work and to drain the swamps is a striking proof that "*Am Yisrael hai,*" that the people of Israel is still alive, since it is able to bring forth maximalists who are ready to sacrifice their lives for their idealism. *They* are young, indeed, and if you want to be young as they are go to Palestine, give up your comfort, till your soil and work in the quarries! But—and this is the point—if you want to be a maximalist *here,* here in the diaspora, in the *galut,* in exile, you have no other choice than to test your maximalism on those things which daily present themselves as what we call our Judaism. Call it a civilization if you want to. But who would dare to deny that Judaism is for the people of the Bible, the people of Moses, Samuel and the prophets first of all a *religious* civilization? "*Shver tsu zein a Yid!*"—not only because of our enemies

eminently because and for the sake
ne Absolute—of God.

1923, in the wake of the first World
, this writer published a book,
aism, a Challenge to Modern Times,"
hich he compared life to a rotating
to the center of which we must
. How easy it was for our "enlight-
" Jews to leave that center of their
sh life. They simply got up from
firm seats and, by the centrifugal
r of the rotation, they were flung to
periphery. There have been "Jews on
periphery" from then on. But now
vant to become "creative" again; we
to become creative *here in America.*
y other word we hear from our pul-
is "creative living." Well then, if
is truly our aim, we have to find the
back from the periphery to the
r, that means we have to fight the
ifugal, secularizing, individualistic
s of modern life—which is no easy
But there lies the way. The way may
ard, but it has to be followed, or
. . . ?

KAPLAN'S REPLY

THE gist of Rabbi Cohn's critique of Reconstruc-
sm is that, though Reconstructionism
ndering a service to Judaism in stress-
he unity of Jewish life, it is not cre-
in that it yields to modernism which
monymous with relativism and in-
ual convenience. For Judaism to be
ive, it should accept the principle
Jewish life is God-centered and that
aditional observances are as absolute
authoritative as its ethical principles.
se observances may have undergone
ge in the past, but the Jew never lost
of their divine and absolute char-
. This attitude, which calls for maxi-
sm, is characteristic of youth. The
native attitude, which accepts mini-
sm, is a sign of debility.

The Significance of Relativism

What Dr. Cohn fails to realize is that modernism, as represented intellectually by relativism, is the product of a devoted striving for the absolute truth and that its conclusions are factually a greater approximation to the truth than is tradition, whether secular or religious.

Relativism means that, for a thing to be seen or understood for what it really is, it must be viewed in its context in time and space. All values are such in relation to standards. To apply ancient standards in evaluating complex modern situations is like applying ancient tools for measuring quantities that require the most accurate precision instruments for their measurement. Einstein's critique of Newton is that Newton failed to reckon with the relation of our solar system to other systems but dealt with it as though it were itself static and absolute.

Dr. Cohn cites Karl Marx as an example of relativism in social thinking. But the real trouble with Marx is that he was not enough of a relativist. In his preoccupation with the economic factors in human history he failed to reckon adequately with other factors, with that of human personality for example. He, therefore, tended to oversimplify social forces by analogy with mechanical forces. From this tendency to treat economic motivations as absolute determinants of social, political and cultural trends arose his failure to see the role of religion in social dynamics, as well as other errors in his thinking. His forecast of the course of social evolution was not verified by the very turn taken by the communist revolution which he inspired. It took place not in countries with a highly developed capitalistic economy as he had predicted, but in regions that had hardly emerged from feudalism.

To refuse to accept relativism, in the sense of evaluating situations in relation

to their context in time and space, is to refuse to accept the clear implications of the Copernican view that the earth moves around the sun. It is to accept as absolute the notions that were designed to orient the human being to a conception of the universe now known to be false. According to that conception the world was designed solely for man. It was a cozy little world, the upper regions of which were inhabited by a God who, with the help of a court of ministering angels, took perfect care of man and of his home. He sometimes punished human beings for sins of which they were not aware, but always in their own ultimate interest. And He intervened in behalf of His obedient servants, whenever they found themselves in danger, suspending even His own laws as applied to the physical universe. The whole spirit of the argument against Reconstructionism is part of the nostalgia which looks back with regret upon that cozy world in which for so many centuries man was at home.

Freedom Not Convenience

Dr. Cohn contends that the modern spirit seeks convenience rather than submission to authority. I cannot concede that to be true. There is as much submission abroad as there was in the past: submission to the authority of tradition and of the group. The question is whether such submission is good. What Dr. Cohn calls *individualism* and *convenience,* we call *freedom.* And we believe that it is more in keeping with man's destiny to foster that freedom than to suppress it. Insofar as relativism is the closest approximation to absolute truth, and individualism is the closest approximation to the freedom and dignity of the individual person, they are more truly the voice of God than the traditions which deny them.

It is interesting in this connection to note what the late Charles Evans Hughes had to say about the authority of the Federal Constitution. "The Constitution," he says, "is what the judges say it is." But what the judges say it is obviously is conditioned by many factors other than the text of the Constitution itself. The authority of the Constitution is thus relative. But the legal relativism of Hughes is not anarchism; it is a constructive not a destructive relativism. And that is the kind of relativism which Reconstructionists advocate.

From Dr. Cohn's point of view, which regards tradition as absolute in its authority, any sacrifice of tradition to what he calls convenience and we call freedom seems a surrender of principle to expediency. He, therefore, charges Reconstructionism with being secularist. That is hardly fair. A perusal of Reconstructionist literature would reveal, even to a casual reader, that it has always insisted that Judaism is a *"religious civilization."* Reconstructionism has been as clear and explicit in its critique of secularist nationalism, for example, as it has in its critique of Reform and Neo-Orthodoxy. It has pointed out again and again that the most significant contributions of Jewish civilization to mankind have been in the field of religion and ethics and that we should cultivate these fields today. Indeed, we have been frequently criticized for the amount of space we devote in our magazine and in our books and pamphlets to theological and religious discussion. Is it to secularize Judaism that we have published a Sabbath Prayer Book, a Haggadah, and supplementary prayers for the High Holiday services?

The Issue of Maximalism vs. Minimalism

We come now to the distinction that Dr. Cohn makes between maximalism and minimalism in observance. From his abso-

point of view, maximalism consists iformity with the maximum of tradi- observance. Though he realizes n practice we must be tolerant of a n degree of non-observance based fficulties created by circumstance, he not admit that in theory we may to the notion that a traditional ance can be other than a divine ob- n. It is only, however, when we raditional observances in their rela- o their origin and history that we n a position to see how and why were conceived to be divinely or- d. Under changed conditions they mes lose those values which were sible for the ascription to them ine origin. Their observance may nterfere with the realization of the values that once were associated hem. There is no denying the reli- value, in its day, of the sacrificial p in the Temple. But in our day, ipation in such worship would not reverence but disgust. Ob- ces that have lost their value de- te into superstitious practices. m that point of view it is the tradi- tionalists who are the minimalists and the Reconstructionists who are the maximalists, and it is traditionalism that shows the debility of age and Reconstructionism the creative vitality of youth. For traditionalism, by its reliance on the authority of the past, exempts the individual from responsibility for seeking God in present experience, since past experience is supposed to be a sufficient guide. Reconstructionism, on the other hand, demands that the living generation assume full responsibility for its own decisions and use tradition as affording data on which to base present judgments but not as being itself decisive. When we let the past prejudge a present situation, we are governed by prejudice. Prejudice, which is the abdication of present judgment to the authority of the past, obstructs rather than advances the cause of true religion. Religious absolutism, like political absolutism, keeps the spirit of man shackled; the kind of relativism that we advocate imposes on us the difficult and dangerous task of striking off the shackles that fetter the human spirit and prevent it from fulfilling its divine destiny.

nted—A Jewish National "Wedding Gift Fund"

By SOLOMON LIEBMAN

I AM not altogether certain that the plan I wish to pre- ven if practical, can be successful- ried out. However, let us think it nd decide together. If at all work- this plan would become a perma- nd ample source of income for an ely worthy cause, one of great and great need.

ems to me that the restoration of w almost extinct Jewish family life ope must become one of our most duties. Our desperate efforts to save the pitiful remnants of our people abroad should not blind us to the equally important task of helping bring *new Jewish life* into being by encouraging and assisting in the processes of marriage, home-making and family raising. I therefore suggest that a special Jewish National Wedding Gift Fund, *Keren Hakhnasat Kallah,* be established here in the United States, eventually to comprise all Jewry throughout the world.

The Need for the Fund

The income of this fund should be used

for the special and explicit purpose of helping to establish newlyweds in Europe, in Palestine or wherever they may eventually settle and may be in need of it. We here can hardly imagine their extreme poverty, their complete lack of the basic necessities of civilized human life. Oh, how much even the smallest wedding gift would help to alleviate their misery and bring a new ray of hope into their gloomy lives, to say nothing of the material help! A mere piece of furniture, a few pieces of linen, a set of dishes, some utensils, a dress, a suit—all these little things—what a help, what a source of happiness and what a great inducement towards speeding up the establishment of new families and new life! These gifts should have nothing to do with relief and charities; this is a Wedding Gift from American or world Jewry to their unfortunate brothers and sisters over there.

A Memorial to the 93 Martyred Virgins

This fund should be dedicated to the sacred memory of the 93 Jewish martyred girls in Poland, who during this horrible war bravely chose honorable death rather than pollution by the Nazi beasts. Upon being captured one day they begged for a mere hour of solitude and prayer before parting with their old life. This granted them, they prayed and died as a group through voluntary death by poison, in the very same synagogue where they were locked in by their captors before deportation to a life of shame and human slavery.

It is true, of course, that millions of other innocent people perished during this unfortunate war at the bloody hands of the Nazi maniacs. However, this act of heroism, this deep sense of human dignity, of womanly pride and chastity should be immortalized on a national scale. It should serve as a tribute to womanhood, as a memorial to spiritual nobility in life as in death, and as an inspiration for generations to come.

The establishment of such a fund and its dedication to the sacred memory of these girl martyrs would be the most appropriate expression of our reverence and sorrow, as well as the fulfillment of the most sacred of our duties.

Now, let us see how the establishment of such a fund can be successfully organized and what its yearly income should amount to.

The Organization of the Fund

It is obvious that, in order to be effective and of real value, a plan of this type can only be organized on a national scale. If at all worthy and workable, it should be approved and adopted by the combined organizational strength of all Jewry regardless of party lines, beliefs or affiliations. The actual carrying out of the plan, however, should be entrusted to our women's organizations, not as individual groups, but as a combined body. They are unquestionably the best fitted for this great task because marriage and home are primarily woman's domain. They should be assisted by our religious and spiritual leaders who officiate at most weddings.

Now, assuming that this "Wedding Gift Fund" is nationally approved and adopted, then at each and every Jewish wedding, regardless of size and station, a definite social-religious ritual should be appropriately carried out by the proper authorities. At the same time, all participating guests, should, in honor of the bride and groom, contribute small cash gifts to this National Wedding Gift Fund for brides and grooms abroad. Assuming also that there is only a limited number of guests and that contributions be nationally standardized and confined to small amounts—say, a dollar or two, so as to avoid financial embarrassment to the

. or unpleasantness for the hosts—
then, the income from the average
ing would range from perhaps a
red to several hundred dollars each.
this sum is not much in itself, but
plied by the tens of thousands of
ings annually — silver and golden
ings included — it would eventually
p to millions of dollars, an annual
e that can never diminish or fail.
a wedding, guests are in a holiday
, happy and generous. They would
der it a privilege thus to honor the
and groom by contributing in their
to this National Wedding Gift

lso suggest that there be established
tional "Golden Book of Weddings"
nich the names of the bride and
n thus honored by their guests are
entered as well as the total amount
buted. These yearly completed and
"Golden Books of Weddings"
be deposited in some national
n shrine or institution such as the
ew University in Palestine.

easibility of the Plan

uld brides and parents allow their
to be solicited at their parties?
not? If the plan would be nationally
ed and widely practiced, and if the
gifts would be nationally standard-
and limited to small amounts—who
possibly object to contributing to
ly a cause.
, if properly handled and efficiently
ized, there would be no difficulty
oever in raising such funds. It
become the accepted order of the
nd the standard at all weddings.
o not say that this is the best or
way. I am merely pointing out some
le ways and means. It would all
as naturally as life itself. Millions
thus be raised annually without
ing to any special cumbersome or-
ganizational machinery. This method would prove to be a relatively easy way to collect the necessary funds and would be enjoyed even by the donors themselves.

The fact that we are at present already more than overloaded with all sorts of relief and organizational work should not stop us. On the contrary, *now* is the time for big plans on a national scale, *now* when the need is so great and our hearts and minds are so deeply concerned for our broken and homeless brethren overseas.

REALITIES AND VAULES

(*Continued from Page* 9)

est our best Jewish minds in Judaism and to keep them interested.

▼

WE HAVE RECEIVED IN OUR office a copy of the "Discussion Kit" sent out by the Los Angeles Jewish Community Council to its members in preparation for its Fall Meeting. The Kit contains, in addition to the member's voting credentials, an attractive illustrated pamphlet—"Design for Community Living," on the organization and activities of the Council, the agenda to be discussed at the meeting, background material bearing on the discussions, and an analysis of some of the problems to be considered. There is also an invitation to the members to jot down their views on each question in space reserved for the purpose. In a word, the Council has taken every reasonable precaution to prevent the meeting from becoming a cut and dried affair. It emphasizes each member's responsibility and stimulates his thinking to enable him the better to discharge that responsibility. It is a model of democratic procedure and we should like to see other Jewish organizations plan their meetings with equal care and with equal concern for intelligent member participation.

The One Unheard

By NORMAN PODHORETZ

I walked in under the ark
Where the lions stand rampant
And cannot leap, guarding
The Tablets of the Law.
They are, I thought, like these men,
Looking forward, always
Looking forward
With eyes of stone,
With numb bodies,
With cruelly muted roars
That our minds hear
Even as they sometimes hear God
Speaking unto them.
They look forward,
Never turning to look
At the tablets, which reach out
Like the expanded chest of a Samson,
Each breast tattooed with
The secrets of Life.

And I told them with a voice
That will never be heard:
Wail and scream at the ark
And the lions
  In your synagogues!
Or drool your insensibilities
  In your churches,
While they on the stained windows
Weep waterless tears,
And turn to flee
From their paint and glass
Roots, but are bound
By legs deaf to commandment.
Wail and scream,
And testify, O testify—
  LOVETHYNEIGHBORASTHOU-
    LOVESTHYSELF,
But feed on his flesh
And drink of his blood in mighty draught
And cross your breast,
Or kiss your shawl, and testify—
  LOVETHYGOD,THOUSHALTNOT-
    KILL,THOUSHALTNOTCOVET,
While you sharpen your teeth.

And God sits upon His throne, I thought
And God sits and weeps that He made
    man
To proclaim His greatness.
And then there throbbed in my brain
What will never be heard:
Life is short. Life is short. Life is short.
Then begin, O my Lord!

Random Thoughts

THE will to live is animal; the will to let live is human; the will to help others live is divine.

* * *

A well-known scion of a famous Hasidic dynasty argued that the practice among Hasidim of using liquor as a means of becoming God-intoxicated was perfectly legitimate.

I thought that he was himself under the influence of liquor when he said that. I knew better, however, when I came across the following in Ruth Benedict's "Patterns of Culture":

"Among the Pueblos there is a tribe—the Pima—whose great ceremony of the year, by means of which all blessings were obtained, was the brewing of cactus beer. The priests drank first, and then the people, 'to get religious.' Intoxication in their

ıice and in their poetry is the syno-
of religion."

ıe truth of the matter is that going
ɔn a binge, whether through drink,
ndulgence, or war, is characteristic
an in all stages of civilization.

ıe only difference is this: pre-modern
did these things religiously; modern
does them scientifically.

iidently neither religion alone nor
ce alone can keep man sober, con-
t or peaceable.

nat we need is that religion become
tific and science religious.

* * *

what we are and do, proportion
ts as much as ingredients. Two peo-
may have the same ingredients of
ıcter, yet be different from each
as water and peroxide of hydro-
which are composed of the same
ical elements but in different pro-
ɔns.

* * *

elligence is often nothing more than
knowingly in a difficult situation
an animal does instinctively.

* * *

the leading (Jewish) citizens of this
ry would spend a tenth of the time
ffort on vital problems of (Jewish)
tion that they spend on hospitals or
iscussion of foreign policy (and anti-
ism), both highly commendable ac-
s, I cannot help believing the future
r democracy (and of Jewish life)
l be more secure."

e foregoing statement minus the
theses was made recently by Dr.
s B. Conant, president of Harvard,
e the New England Council. The
theses do not qualify but confirm
he said.

* * *

w that America has turned against
ew Deal, and is determined to dem-
te the glories of the competitive system, it is well to remember the story that went the rounds a few years ago about a store-keeper in a small town.

One day he saw a sign in the window of his competitor's store, which read: "I am a hundred per cent American. I hate the Germans."

Not to be outdone, the store-keeper put up a sign in his window, which read: "I am a two-hundred per cent American. I hate everybody."

* * *

Jewish young people are required to make more renunciations than non-Jewish. They should, therefore, be repaid with an extra measure of time, interest, companionship and love on the part of their parents and the Jewish community.

* * *

It is not what one says but what one does that counts. That is why we would never think of putting a flying buttress in the same class with a flying fortress.

* * *

Spiritual goods pine away from non-consumption.

* * *

Some theologians succeed in making actual theophobes out of potential theophiles.

* * *

The Rorshach method is a type of psychiatric testing whereby what the patient sees in ink blots reveals the condition of his mind.

Writers like Gertrude Stein, who make a specialty of being unintelligible, seem to be interested chiefly in supplying such ink blots.

* * *

Mysticism, which is not merely a form of belated magic but a reaching out for reality in all its concreteness, denies the assumption of the philosophers that God is absolutely unknowable.

On the contrary, it insists upon our

experiencing His reality as vividly as we do our own.

The truth is that our own personality is inexhaustible, and therefore can never be fully known.

* * *

It is said that between 1840 and 1940 the mechanical horse-power at man's disposal has increased a thousandfold. With atomic energy in the offing, it will probably have increased a million times before many years are over.

In the meantime human beings are emotionally as immature as they were in 1840.

Imagine entrusting hand grenades to a seven-year old brat, who has managed to demolish a houseful of furniture with his toy hatchet.

Such is the present state of world security.

* * *

Love, hate and fear grow on what they impel us to do.

* * *

In planning for the future, whether individual or national, we need *reason* to give us a firm grasp on the eternal principles of truth and justice, *faith* to imbue us with confidence in their ultimate, even if not immediate, triumph, *imagination* to summon up before our mind's eye all the realities and eventualities with which we shall have to cope, and *courage* to give us the strength to endure and overcome the difficulties we are likely to encounter.

The absence of any one of these four elements is an invitation to serious mistakes.

* * *

In the opeuing *mishnah* of the treatise called *Sanhedrin,* the statement is made that the act of consecration by the elders by means of the "laying on of the hands" requires the presence of three men.

The commentators differ. Some thin the statement refers to a communal sac rifice at the Temple. Others maintai that it refers to the ordination of a elder.

Very often the two are synonymous.

* * *

No one can *misunderstand* us as muc as we do ourselves.

That applies to peoples as well as t individuals.

* * *

"Anti-Semitism is the socialism of th fool," said the famous socialist Augus Bebel. Unfortunately socialism is far fron being fool-proof.

* * *

If there can be honor among thieves why may there not be socialism amon imperialists?

* * *

Our enemies, both British and Arab are concentrating their barrage on ou unbroken historic connection with ou ancient homeland. We must, therefore render our claim, which is based upo that connection, impregnable.

A little book by Berl Locker, entitle "A Stiff-Necked People," just publishe by Victor Gollancz, Ltd., will provide you with the facts that establish ou claim.

In addition, learn to call our nationa homeland by its proper name, *Eretz Yisrael* instead of Palestine. That name which means the Land of Israel, validates our indissoluble bond with our nationa home.

* * *

The alibi of the liberal that you can't draw the line between the freedom of expression and the freedom to throw a theatre full of people into a panic by yelling "fire," is largely responsible for the menace of Fascism.

M. M. K.

Book Notes

ABUSE OF THE POLICE POWER

ERNMENT AGAINST THE OPLE, by Asher Brynes. Dodd, ad & Co. N. Y., 1946, *pp.* 265.

IN these days of strain and stress between govern- and between governments and peo- it is difficult to gain perspective. questions bedevil us as we try to le for the complexity of society with sort of social structure. Not the least se questions in the United States is elation of the military and police people as a whole. The war ended e draft continues. There are those rgue for compulsory military train- a desideratum even in peace time. President Truman in his ill-con- d appeal to Congress in the rail- strike, showed vividly and fearfully se to which the government could ilitary force in its struggle to keep . The threat to use naval personnel ak the strike of the maritime unions ther case in point of government st the people.

is, it seems to me, is the theme of s' book. When the government de- a secret police of its own or when overnment turns to the military to police the people, then democ- is doomed and wars are inevitable. people under such systems have no l over the policeman or the mili- an and, as a consequence, the peo- ave no political life of their own. moral seems to be clear. The people prevent the rise of any police power is not responsive and responsible to In addition, the policeman must be given so much power that his actions are chiefly dependent upon his own interpretation of the law. Arbitrary police action must be kept well within bounds and the policeman must be accountable, at least to some extent, for his actions even as a policeman. In other words, Brynes is warning his readers that power must ultimately remain in the hands of the people if we are not to have modern versions of tyranny and oppression. This warning is coupled with the insight that one way in which the people can lose power is through the increasing irresponsibility of police power and the failure to define clearly the limits of the actions of policemen.

To support his contention Brynes traces the history of the police in Russia, England and, with less completeness, in the United States and some other countries. Throughout, the attempt is made to show that "local self-government and wholesale warfare are incompatible," Brynes says, "but if we realized how deeply the menace of a huge standing army is rooted in a centralized civil service and how the effect of both permeates a society through and through, so that it is silly to think that we, as democrats, can match only the former and be safe; if we saw that in every authoritarian State a double mobilization has taken place we might stop talking of simple disarmament or the exchange of armaments as a cure for war" (p. 254).

One of the difficulties of any argument from history is that one can never be sure what is cause and what is effect. If you begin historical evidence at a given moment, then perhaps, the militarization of the police is the cause, and war and tyranny are the effect. If, however, you begin

a few years earlier or later, then the threat of war and the presence of a tyrant are the cause of the militarization of the police. Brynes points to an important factor in the preservation not merely of peace but also of liberty, "there must be a measure of genuine local autonomy in the management of domestic peace forces" and "there must be no political police whatever." It is also important as the founders of the United States clearly realized that there must be civilian control even of purely military forces. But I feel that Brynes neglects to take into consideration adequately the tyrants and rulers. For it is often personal lust for power that brings about the establishment of a political police.

LOUIS O. KATTSOFF

A CRUEL BUT HONEST NOVEL

THE HUCKSTERS, by Frederic Wakeman. Rinehart, 307 *pp.* $2.50.

IN this brilliantly-written satire on the radio advertising business, Frederic Wakeman has written a novel which is enjoying a wide sale, and understandably. It is racy, bawdy, witty and clever. It tells the "inside" of a tremendous business. It draws fascinating personalities. And it has had the benefit of front-page reviews in leading literary journals.

The critics, however, have overlooked one significant element in *The Hucksters.* In its attitude towards Jews as a people there is a good deal to study. The protagonists in this book are in high financial brackets, but they are spiritually cheap, hard and ruthless. This is the first book I have read in which radio people are placed on the same level with Hollywood personalities, and nothing is missing. Here one finds casual sexuality, big money dealings, corruption and frustration. Though in other respects unlike Budd Schulberg's *What Makes Sammy Run,* this novel describes characters not ur like the executives in the Schulberg bool There are frank talk, loose men and wo men, talented writers who find themselv puppets of authoritative dictators of ir dustry.

And in *The Hucksters* there is an ap proach to Jews which is unhappy but n unusual. If Wakeman describes things a they are—and he certainly seems we acquainted with his subject matter—th Jew as a person and as a symbol in th world of high chicanery faces constar pressures which threaten to crush hin even if he is a Jew by birth alone.

Surely Jean Ogilvie, the sensual nigh club singer who is looking for a husban and not a casual playmate, is not reall Jewish. But early in the book she uses vulgar Yiddish word and the reader ge the idea that she is not, perhaps, a tru Ogilvie. Later, after a romantic sessio with Vic Norman, the major protagoni in this novel, she says to him: "Mayb you're so final about not marrying m because I'm a Jew."

Norman blows up and answers, and i his response one senses that Frederi Wakeman is laying down his own phi osophy of Jews:

> "How dare you throw your race or religion or whatever the hell it is into my teeth? I thought you knew me better than that. How could you misjudge me so? The only Jews I happen to be intolerant of are those who are stupid enough to think I might be concerned with their Jewishness. I know this preoccupation is a deep thing with all of you. But please have the grace not to let it enter into our relationship. And try to understand that I have no hatred nor love for Jews, Irish, Welsh, Abyssinians, Seventh Day Adventists or any other group. I only hate or

ve them as individuals, not as mem-
ers of some symbolic cult."

his speech is, generally, a good state-
t of the attitude of the good Gentile,
one to whom Jews, and possibly other
gious people (if they are religious) are
symbolic cult." There is recognition
of a deep "preoccupation" with
ishness. But Vic Norman, as a symbol
ne artistic temperament tied to a huge
ness which is slowly robbing him of
own self-respect, finds that he himself
lges in a subtle bit of Jew-baiting.

is unusual that no reviewers realized
importance of the scene and its im-
tions. Vic Norman has been trying
gn up a comedian for a radio show
discovers that the comic is optioned
me one else. This mixup is due to
shady dealing by Talent, Ltd., a
t agency run by David Lash, who is
w. Norman, who is a shrewd man
all his private misgivings, asks Lash
raighten out the mess at Lash's own
nse. But Lash is wary.

will cost Lash $68,000 to fix things
he doesn't want to waste that kind
money. Norman reminds Lash that
were worked up" about concentra-
camps, "remember?"

sh admits it and then Norman asks,
you ever do anything about it?"
says that he invested half-a-million
efugee work.

d then, when Lash refuses to spend
oo on Norman's deal, Norman says
the agent involved would not be
ed for the double-cross of Norman's
No, he adds: "They're going to say
did it. They're going to say that
Dave Lash, a Jew, pulled this fast
Yes, Dave, you know there are peo-
who are going to say it just that

as soon as he has spoken, Vic Nor-man feels "cheap and nasty" and asks for Lash's forgiveness. Lash, suddenly "stern, bitter and unforgiving," refuses to overlook it and walks out after saying that he "respected" Norman.

Here one finds that Vic Norman, twisted by frustration, mixed up in a business he hates, uses the Jew symbol to batter an opponent. For Lash gives in to the Norman argument, realizing that as a Jew he cannot cope with the Norman attack. Norman wins, but he had to invoke Jew-baiting to do it.

It is not Frederic Wakeman who is to blame. As a keen observer he sees what is about him. He senses the defensive feeling in Jean Ogilvie who does nothing to parade her Jewishness but immediately mentions it when she thinks that it makes a difference to her lover. He notes that Vic Norman, a sensitive fellow, falls for the same cheap, unscrupulous tricks as any anti-Semite when he cannot win any other way.

This is, in many ways, a cruel but honest novel. It was written in wrath and brutality. No punches are pulled. And the Jews in it, brought in without malice and without forethought but only because they are there, are shown to be victims of a society and a state of mind which reflect poorly on American civilization.

HAROLD U. RIBALOW

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RECEIVED FOR REVIEW

Space does not permit our reviewing all the interesting books on Jewish themes that are sent to us for review purposes. We therefore shall list books that we receive for review whether we review them subsequently or not The present list is not complete and will be supplemented in future issues.

PATHWAYS THROUGH THE BIBLE, by Mortimer J. Cohen, illustrated by Arthur Szyk, contains extracts from every book in the Bible, in modern English translation, with brief but instructive introductions, 548 pp., Jewish Publication Society, Phila., Pa., 1946.

A BIBLE FOR THE LIBERAL, edited by Dagobert D. Runes, with a foreword by Lin Yutang, contains ethical passages from Old and New Testaments in the King James Version, 368 pp., Philosophical Library, New York, N. Y., 1946.

PIONEERS FOR PEACE THROUGH RELIGION, by Charles S. Macfarland, with an introduction by Arthur J. Brown, describes the efforts on behalf of world peace by The Church Peace Union, 256 pp., including index, Fleming H. Revell Co., London and Edinburgh.

THE JEWS IN RUSSIA, VOLUME I, THE STRUGGLE FOR EMANCIPATION, by Louis Greenberg, 210 pp. including bibliographical note and index, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1944.

JEWS IN THE POST-WAR WORLD, by Max Gottschalk and Abraham G. Duker, 224 pp., The Dryden Press, New York, N. Y., 1945.

HITLER'S PROFESSORS, by Max Weinreich, describes the part played by scholarship in the Nazi crimes against the Jews, Jewish Scientific Institute (Yivo), New York, 1946.

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, includes official statement of views, reports of all committees, list of members and of contributing agencies, act of incorporation and by-laws, 175 pp.

PALESTINE, PROBLEM AND PROMISE, by Robert R. Nathan, Oscar Gass and Daniel Creamer, a careful analysis of t Palestine situation by scientifically train economists, 661 pp., Public Affairs Pre Washington, D. C., 1946.

FIGHTING FOR AMERICA (1944 ed tion), a record of the participation of Je ish men and women in the armed forc during 1944. 290 pp., National Jewish W fare Board.

THE ALIEN AND ASIATIC IN AMER CAN LAW, by Milton R. Konvitz, 299 p including bibliography, table of cases, a index, Cornell University Press, Ithac N. Y., 1946.

TOLEDOT HAHINNUKH BEYISRA BADOROT HA-AHARONIM, (History Jewish Education in Modern Times), V ume I (Jewish Education in Europe 178 1914), by Zvi Scharfstein, 406 pp., Og New York, N. Y.

A MODEL PROGRAM FOR THE TALMU TORAH, prepared and published by t Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregatio contains a complete curriculum for t *talmud torah,* 205 pp.

MY CARAVAN OF YEARS, AN AUTOBI GRAPHY, by Goldie Stone, tells of author's early life in Lithuania, her mig tion to America and her adjustment to American scene. 252 pp., Bloch Publishi Co., New York, N. Y.

BURNING LIGHTS, by Bella Chagall, w illustrations by Marc Chagall, reminiscen by the wife of the celebrated Jewish paint of her childhood home in Russia, 268 p Schocken Books, New York, 1946.

THIEVES IN THE NIGHT, by Arthur Kod ler, a novel dealing with the Jewish sistance to the British in Palestine, 375 p The Macmillan Co., New York, 1946.

THE SPIRIT RETURNETH, by Selma St a historical novel of the martyrdom of G man Jews in the Middle Ages at the t of the Black Death, translated by Lud Lewisohn, Jewish Publication Society, 19

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